ESOL Skills for Life (4692)

Remote assessment guide

Version 1.0
Last modified 19-June-2023
For external use

Document revision history

Version	Summary of change	Approval date
1.0	Document created	June 2023

Contents

1.   Introduction

Remote assessment is where an assessor is examining a candidate, or reviewing a supervised recording of them, from a different location to that of the candidate. Remote assessment does not cover the independent completion of tasks or generation of evidence by a candidate, without the direct observation by an assessor.

Where assessments are undertaken remotely, all assessment requirements (as specified in the relevant qualification and assessment material) must be met, to maintain their validity, reliability, and security. This includes the specified level of control and all assessor and internal quality assurance requirements.

This document presents the conditions to support the valid, secure remote assessment of our qualifications by centres. It only applies to internally marked assessment.

1.1.   Reading level 1 and 2

Please refer to our Remote Invigilation Service Centre guide for information on e-volve tests. The paper-based assessments for Reading level 1 and 2 cannot be completed remotely.

2.   General conditions for remote assessment

Where remote assessment is permitted, the conditions in this section must be met.

Assessments can be completed at the candidate's workplace or home, dependent on them meeting the minimum technical and equipment requirements, and in line with health and safety measures.

Supervision should be completed by the tutor/assessor where possible. If not, the person supervising must be familiar with the conditions for the assessment. It is the responsibility of the centre to ensure that the person supervising is appropriately trained in their duties and familiar with the conditions of the assessment to be supervised remotely. This should not be a relative of the candidate, or anyone with a specific interest in the outcome of the assessment.

2.1.   Security of assessment materials

When assessments are taken remotely, centres must ensure that the security of any assessment materials is maintained when providing access to them for candidate. Centres should continue to use their own secure internal systems to administer assessments that allow them to manage candidates' ability to access assessment materials. These must reflect any restrictions specified in the relevant assessment materials.

Centres must ensure that assessment materials are made available to candidates via secure internal centre systems and are not sent via email or shared in any form (including social media) that will allow candidates to copy, download, print, share or save them locally.

2.2. Online meeting security

Where online meeting technology is used for remote assessment, the centre must consider the following:

- If the technology operates locked meetings, a password should be set and shared with the candidates in advance.
- Reviewing the security and privacy policy for the chosen technology.
- Checking for any security issues or technical issues that may affect your selected technology.
- If opting to record meetings for internal quality audit purposes, ensure that they can be securely stored.
- After the assessment has finished, the assessor is responsible for ending the meeting.

In any remote session, there will be short breaks or stutters in audio/video (minor interruptions) of 1-2 seconds in length. There may be a small number of these events during the assessment. This will be largely due to local network usage, stability, and sharing conditions. The assessor should consider if this could be infringement where:

- A series of minor interruptions persist over a significant period (10 minutes or more).
- A minor interruption repeats on a significant basis (more than 5 times over the duration of the exam).
- It is suspected that the interruption may be deliberate.
- There is a full disconnection of both cameras and audio for more than 5 minutes or where less than 5 minutes, a suitable explanation (power cut, router crashed, etc) cannot be provided by the candidate.

2.3. External quality assurance

Remote assessments administered via online meetings is subject to external quality assurance. You must keep records of all assessments which are supervised remotely.

For Speaking & Listening assessments, you must always notify your EQA in advance. In these instances, City & Guilds associates may observe the assessment by attending the online meeting. They may provide verbal feedback following the assessment and will provide a written report of the outcomes.

Our Quality Delivery team will arrange remote quality assurance activities in the same way as normal, and you will need to provide secure access to whatever system you are using, to

allow them to attend. The access provided should allow for random sampling to be undertaken on the day of the EQA activity.

3. Writing and entry level Reading

All remote assessments must be supervised on a one-to-one basis.

Centres must ensure candidates are prepared for the assessment and have access to all the equipment specified in the assessment materials before any assessment takes place. If they do not have access to the relevant equipment, they cannot take the assessment.

The centre must have technology and processes that maintain the security of the assessment materials, generate evidence that can be retained by the centre and authenticate that the responses are the candidate's own.

The published mark schemes/marking guidance and grade boundaries must be used to mark the assessment and determine the final grade.

3.1. Sharing assessment materials

The centre must have technology and processes that maintain the security of the assessment materials, generate evidence that can be retained by the centre and authenticate that the responses are the candidate's own. Oral questioning is **not** permitted for multiple-choice questions. The use of mobile phones, texts, and email sharing of answers is prohibited and would count as potential malpractice.

Assessment materials must be shared securely, the centre can use one of the following options:

- the assessor can share them by sharing their screen to display the questions, or
- they can be made available to candidates via the centre's secure internal systems e.g., VLE, Teams, Moodle platforms, Google etc.

The assessor must ensure:
- candidates do not download, copy, screen print or save a local copy.
- assessment materials are not sent via email, either as a link or an attachment.

3.2. Assessor responsibilities

3.2.1. Before the assessment

Before the assessment, centres must ensure the candidate:
- has all required equipment/materials ready and available,

- has a suitable location for the assessment, that allows them to meet the requirements of the assessment, without interruptions,
- is aware of the assessment conditions and the consequences of not meeting them, including specified or recommended assessment durations.
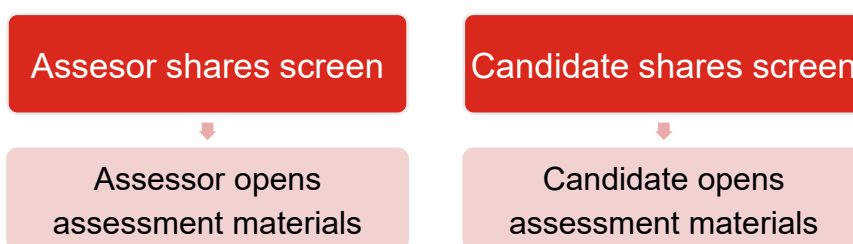
3.2.2.   Starting assessments

At the start of assessments, assessors must:
- verify the candidate's identity, using photographic ID and record this on their assessment paperwork. The candidate must be made aware in advance they will be asked to show some form of photo identification to verify their identity at the start of their assessment.
- check the candidate does not have access to any unauthorised materials, including on the walls,
- ask the candidate to confirm they are alone (unless where authorised due to approved access arrangements) and will not be interrupted during the assessment,
- ensure that the assessment can be undertaken safely and securely.
- ensure the candidate understands the conditions of the assessment.

The candidate **must** enable their webcam and microphone.

To share the assessments securely, either:
- the assessor can either share their screen, or
- the centre can build the assessment content into their own secure assessment platform.

Assesor shares screen	Candidate shares screen
Assessor opens assessment materials	Candidate opens assessment materials

Centres must ensure that the candidate only has access to the materials during the assessment.

Where the assessor is not sharing their screen and the candidate is accessing the assessment materials on their computer, the assessor must be able to supervise the candidate fully. The candidate **must** share their screen on the computer they are using for the assessment. The assessor must check the candidate is sharing their whole desktop, not just a specific application. The whole screen and the taskbar must be visible, as this will help the assessor identify if the candidate opens any other applications.
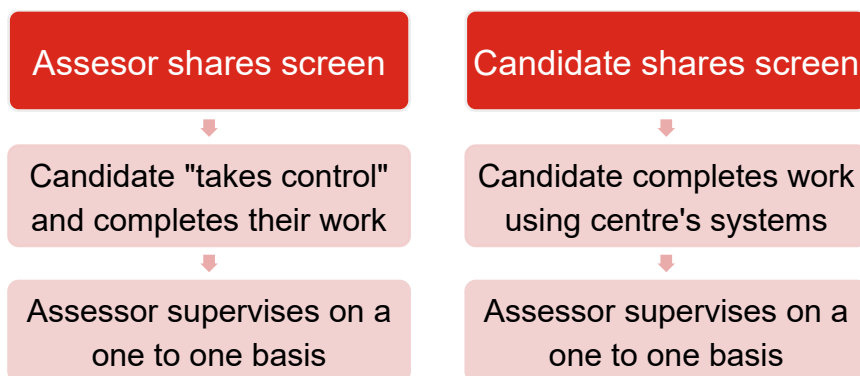
3.2.3. During the assessment

During the assessment, assessors must:

- supervise the candidate continuously throughout the assessment,
- pause the assessment if there are any issues with the video and/or sound, until these can be remedied.
- pause the assessment if they see risks to health and safety, until these can be remedied
- ask for clarification if anything is not clear or cannot be seen,
- report any potential instances of malpractice.

Where issues listed above cannot be remedied the assessment must be stopped, will be considered invalid and must be rescheduled.

The candidate's webcam and microphone must remain on throughout the assessment. While the candidate is completing their work, either:

- the assessor can either share their screen and the candidate can take control and complete the work, or
- the candidate can access the assessment materials through the centre's own secure assessment platform.

Assesor shares screen	Candidate shares screen
⬇	⬇
Candidate "takes control" and completes their work	Candidate completes work using centre's systems
⬇	⬇
Assessor supervises on a one to one basis	Assessor supervises on a one to one basis

Where the candidate is accessing the assessment materials through the centre's systems, they must work on a synchronous collaborative document, such as in VLE, Teams, Moodle platforms, Google etc, and the supervisor must have the document open to be able to observe.

Candidates **must not** save their work on their hard drive or locally.

3.2.4.   End of the assessment

At the end of the assessment, the assessor must:

- confirm the end of the assessment,
- ensure that candidate work has been saved and retained securely on the centre's technology platform.

Notes made by the candidate during the assessment must be destroyed. Candidates must not retain any material produced during the assessment.

3.3.   Guidance on specific assessments

3.3.1.   Writing Activity 1

Within Activity 1 candidates are asked to correct errors within a section of text. The centre can extract these sections of text and share them with the candidate electronically via a *Notepad file* for them to amend. Centres must extract and share only this piece of text. They should not send the entire Activity 1 to candidates.

3.3.2.   Reading - use of dictionaries

Where assessments are being taken remotely the use of electronic dictionaries or websites, i.e. the Collins dictionary website, is permitted for tasks where candidates are asked to look up the definition of words. However, if the candidate is using a website, the assessor must be able to observe this taking place, in order to prevent malpractice. The candidate must share their screen when using a dictionary website.

4.   Speaking & Listening

For the speaking and listening assessment, the assessor/interlocutor does not have to be in the same location as the candidate.

If the interlocutor and assessor roles are being fulfilled by different staff, they can be in different locations and neither has to be in the same location as the candidate.

In all cases the centre must:

- meet all requirements of the assessment,
- be able to verify the candidate's identity,
- have video or audio evidence of each assessment,
- keep records on which assessments were completed remotely,
- inform their EQA in advance of the assessment being done remotely

The assessor must be confident about the identity of every candidate that completes an assessment. If the assessor suspects that a candidate has taken an assessment in the name of another candidate, this must be reported to City & Guilds immediately as potential malpractice.

4.1. Video or audio evidence

Where video or audio evidence is being used, the centre **must**:
- test all video or audio recording equipment before the assessment begins
- instruct candidates to clearly state their full name and candidate enrolment number at the beginning of each recording
- securely store all recordings, on the centre's computer system as soon as practically possible, not on the individual assessor's personal drive.
- provide good quality recording with clear audio and video
- ensure the voices of the candidate(s) and the interlocutor are clearly audible throughout the assessment
- use a quiet location for recording
- store all recordings until after the next EQA activity
- do not edit recordings.

All filenames of the recordings must be labelled with:
- centre name and number
- candidate enrolment number(s)
- level and assessment activity

Important information to be included in the recording by the assessor
- centre name
- centre number
- name of the assessor and interlocutor
- date of activity
- type of assessment taking place, eg Level 1 group discussion
- name and candidate number(s) of the candidate(s) being assessed, and the names of any participants not being assessed
- location of participants, eg workplace or home – not specific details
- the time the assessment begins and the time the assessment ends.

4.2. Guidance on specific activities

4.2.1. Activity 1 (Listening)

This can be delivered remotely on a 1:1 basis. Centres should play the recording through the web-conferencing software they are using, ensuring they are adhering to the assessment

requirements around the maximum number of plays. The maximum number of plays can be exceeded if a technical issue occurs which prevents the candidate from hearing the recording. A record of this must be made within the assessment documentation. If technical issues continue with the playing of an audio file, the transcript found within the Assessor Pack can be read to the candidate, but not by the candidate's own assessor/tutor.

Centres can also use a 'live speaker' as an access arrangement, for example to enable the candidate to lip-read.

The questions **must** be displayed/shared with the candidate securely before the recording is played. The candidates must be aware of the questions before they start listening.

The centre can either ask the questions orally or use screen sharing functionality to present the Learner Pack to the candidate. Candidates can respond either orally or in writing. If the candidate wishes to provide written responses, their response must be submitted to the assessor before the call is closed. If the assessor choses to share the questions onscreen, this can be done before the recording is played.

Centres must keep records of all candidate responses, so they are available for both internal and external quality assurance.

4.2.2.   Activity 2, 3, 4 – When preparation time is needed.

Centres do not need to invigilate, supervise, or record the preparation sessions for these activities. The centre can share the briefs/topics of the task with candidates on the day of their assessment. This permits the brief to be shared in advance of the scheduled assessment time to allow the candidates to prepare outside of controlled assessment conditions. Centres do not need to record how much preparation time a candidate has.

5.   Suspected malpractice and maladministration

City & Guilds is committed to providing high-quality qualifications which are assessed and awarded consistently, accurately and fairly. To this end we require everyone that is involved in the implementation, assessment and quality assurance of our qualifications and/or assessments to demonstrate honesty and integrity.

5.1. Responsibility to report malpractice

Centre staff who discover or suspect assessment maladministration or malpractice must immediately report this to the Head of Centre. Head of Centres are required to notify the

City & Guilds Investigation & Compliance team and follow the guidance provided in the City & Guilds *Managing cases of suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments* document.

City & Guilds will consider candidate work submitted for assessment electronically as having been declared as authentic by the candidate.

5.1.1.　Suspected malpractice

In cases of suspected malpractice, assessors must warn the candidate that this will be reported to and investigated by City & Guilds, and this may lead to the result(s) for the assessment being invalidated and a penalty being applied.

If the assessor finds the candidate using unauthorised equipment or materials during the assessment, the assessment must be stopped for that candidate. This must be reported to City & Guild and will be investigated as potential malpractice.

5.1.2.　Suspected staff malpractice

If City & Guilds identifies suspected assessment maladministration or malpractice,

City & Guilds will contact the centre to inform them of the malpractice investigation. This could be identified after the assessment, as part of the sampling of assessment records during monitoring activities.

5.1.3.　Failure to report

Failure to report suspected malpractice and/or co-operate with follow up activity can be construed as malpractice and may lead to qualifications not being awarded, certificates not being issued, future entries and/or registrations not being accepted or withdrawal of qualification and/or centre approval.

5.2.　Suspected malpractice guidance

For further information on managing suspected malpractice, please refer to the City & Guilds *Managing cases of suspected malpractice in examinations and assessments* document, available from the Centre document library section of the City & Guilds website, under Assessment Malpractice

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About City & Guilds

Since 1878 we have worked with people, organisations and economies to help them identify and develop the skills they need to thrive. We understand the life changing link between skills development, social mobility, prosperity and success. Everything we do is focused on developing and delivering high-quality training, qualifications, assessments and credentials that lead to jobs and meet the changing needs of industry.

We work with governments, organisations and industry stakeholders to help shape future skills needs across industries. We are known for setting industry-wide standards for technical, behavioural and commercial skills to improve performance and productivity. We train teams, assure learning, assess cohorts and certify with digital credentials. Our solutions help to build skilled and compliant workforces.